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## ELOCUTION AND LECTURING.

ALTHOUGH the educational systems of to-day are somewhat too elaborate and all-embracing, yet a counter-current has of late set in, which current, or wave, has washed away much of the old school traditions, and brought in their stead far more practical ideas. The struggle for the survival of the fittest is growing yearly more and more pressing, and it is now recognised that the aim of our schoolmasters should be, as far as possible, to teach us such things as will be of most service to each individual in the inevitable battle of life. Hence it is that the Modern Sides of our schools, both great and small, are becoming of more importance every day. We give more attention to modern geography, the science of languages, and to the various divisions of natural science. But there is one branch of education, we may almost say of primary education, which has been, and even is now, unwisely neglected. Few schoolmasters give much attention to elocution. The vast numbers of boys and girls are merely expected to read their lessons, or repeat their verses, intelligibly—not intelligently; no art, no expression of feeling and interest, is looked for from them. They are not taught to read—to make a proper use of their voices; the ear is given no critical training; very poor opportunities are afforded to boy or girl to speak *al improvisatore*. Such elegances as these, we are told, the schoolmaster has no leisure to cultivate, or the scholar time to study; and the consequent neglect of such is the cause of much annoyance and bitterness in after-days. How few of us are there who can read aloud, and afford any real pleasure to ourselves or our audience, much less make a short and appropriate speech. A close observer will find the deficiency of training very marked in the ranks of the clergy. Most of our preachers will not trust to extemporary powers, but read their sermons, and even then frequently do so with unmarked grace. The reading of the Lessons and other parts of the Church service, also, is too frequently defective;

so much so, that when we hear the Lessons read with true feeling—with proper intonation of the voice, application of emphasis, and so on—we are pleased beyond measure, it is so novel and rare an experience.

As for the generality of Englishmen, when one of them gets on his feet—be it at a public meeting or dinner, at a family gathering or a wedding breakfast—he is lost. His neat speech, which he had been nervously concocting up to the very last moment, seems to slip from his memory and leave his mind a blank. Few persons in such circumstances have sufficient presence of mind to keep cool; they are miserable, mutter a few words, sentences almost totally unconnected, know not when or how to leave off, and at last sink back in their chairs crushed by a knowledge of their utter failure. We have all seen this sad spectacle repeated over and over again; many of us have experienced the humiliation and misery of such moments. A little determination and steady practice, boldly taking advantage of every opportunity afforded for extempore speech, will soon put an end to this painful awkwardness.

Of the utility and comfort of ready and polished speech, few can doubt; we need not, therefore, quote a mass of authorities—from Demosthenes and Cicero to Macanlay and Carlyle—in support of our arguments. We shall now briefly set forth a few practical hints.

Perhaps one of the gravest and most common faults of young beginners, and we here especially refer to reading and lecturing, is raising the voice to an excessively high pitch. This is both disagreeable to the audience and fatiguing to the performer; moreover, the latter is seldom able to keep on very long at the high pitch he started, but is forced to lower his voice. This produces an unevenness which is inartistic and inappropriate. Others go to the other extreme; they speak so low or so deeply, that when they have gone a certain length, they are obliged to lower their voices for artistic effect, and so become almost inaudible. The reader or lecturer should

conquer his diffidence when confronted by either a small or a large audience. He should speak firmly and distinctly, as though he were emphatically conversing with a circle of friends. The voice must be raised and lowered according to the emotions which the words should produce, or the stress which the lecturer wishes to lay on certain words or passages. Many amateur performers are guilty of reading either hurriedly or drawing out their sentences in an exasperatingly slow manner. Here it may be as well to say a few words on mannerism, for both slow and quick reading may often be classed under the effects of this vice. Readers are apt to think it advisable, if not essential, to adopt some particular style of delivery; and this is cultivated to such a pitch that the effect is annoying and distressing. The fact is we must follow nature as closely as possible, unless we are occupied with farce, when, of course, nature must be tabooed, and art, exaggerated and deformed, called to our aid. To the beginner we would say, be confident, and, above all things, show both animation and interest in what you are about, for without such interest, the most careful study of art principles will be of very little service. The great object should be to interest our audience; and if we are indifferent to the subject on which we have undertaken to dilate, we cannot expect to impart enthusiasm to the listeners.

With regard to the voice, we have already said that the reader should neither speak too loud nor too low, too quickly nor too slowly; the key adopted must differ according to circumstances—the size of the room, number of the audience, &c.; but that key, when once adopted, should be kept to throughout. It will be necessary to raise or lower the voice at different passages; but proportion should always be observed. The speaker should make judicious use of pauses, also observe the period, semicolon, and comma. The due observation of punctuation is the essential part of oratory. Each sign has a special meaning and a special value. With regard to the comma, this may be observed more or less according to the sense of the passage. Judicious readers often insert commas, as it were—make slight pauses—where none appears in the printed book, such being necessary in order to help the voice over long sentences. Pauses are also useful when the speaker or reader wishes to mark some solemn passage, or in comical sketches, lead up to and point out a joke. These pauses should be somewhat longer than those generally allowed for full stops, and the voice immediately before the pause either raised or lowered considerably.

The greatest difficulty which must be faced by those who wish to succeed as elocutionists is the proper placing of emphasis on the words—the kernel of the art lies here—nearly the whole effect of the lecture depends on this. A production must not be read in a monotonous sing-song kind of way—which, unfortunately, seems only too much in favour with some pedagogues—emphasis on words, sentences, and passages is absolutely requisite for good reading. Practice is necessary, and can never be too much cultivated, for sentences may bear various and contradictory meanings according to the placing of emphasis. Emphasis may be said to be divisible into two kinds: first, emphasis of sense, which determines

the meaning, but which, by changing the position, will vary the sense of the sentence; second, emphasis of feeling, which is applied and controlled by emotion. Readers cannot do without emphasis of sense; and though emphasis of feeling is not absolutely requisite, the expression of sentiment and beauty of the lecture entirely depend upon its proper use. These remarks may be applied to the stress on syllables. Careful study must be brought to bear here. To sum up, we may quote the following passage of Blair, who says: 'Follow nature, and consider how she teaches you to utter any sentiment or feeling of your heart.' Do this with taste and discretion, and you cannot fail to produce a pleasing effect on any audience, educated or uneducated.

Oratory and elocution have now come to be looked upon as marketable accomplishments, and, indeed, almost as necessary acquisitions of everyday life. It is a good sign to see with what steadiness the art of elocution is advancing in the favour of the educated classes. In the United States of America, lecturing is general and popular; the peripatetic professors are well patronised, and have a certain position in the economy of society. In England, lecturing has also, of comparatively late years, made great strides in popular estimation. Leaving aside the work of our university and collegiate professors, and the proceedings of learned and educational associations, we find that lecturers have multiplied exceedingly, and on the whole, we believe, manage to make a comfortable living. The great masters of our literary world have all had a turn on the platform—Carlyle, Dickens, Thackeray, Trollope, and many others. But it is of the less known, who have taken up lecturing and public reading as a profession, that we wish to speak. There are many of them who travel about the provinces, holding forth in institutes, public halls, and schoolrooms, carrying knowledge of all kinds—religious, literary, scientific, and political—over the face of the country, and affording an evening's instruction or amusement to the somewhat sleepy inhabitants of some rural district or petty town. They are doing good work, and earning an honest livelihood in a not altogether disagreeable manner. In these days of hard struggle, many an educated man and woman, wrecked prematurely on the rocks of some domestic disaster, have sought refuge in the ranks of elocutionists, and a goodly number of them have found that in their drowning struggles they have not caught only a straw, but a good serviceable oar on which they can depend. Young writers have also taken to reading their productions, thus managing to get double or treble publicity for their writings. It is certain that if either man or woman, with a fairly good education, takes a little trouble in cultivating the art of elocution, and is careful to get hold of an interesting subject on which to dilate and expound with authority, he, or she, will be able to gather together interested audiences in many of our provincial districts. We know of the case of a lady who, left suddenly penniless, took to lecturing on Rational Dress, and managed to maintain not only herself but three children on the proceeds of her lecturing tours. In another instance, an energetic and versatile 'quill-driver,' with a certain humble literary connection,

annually combines business with pleasure, and pays for his summer outing by the delivery of a series of lectures in the smaller provincial towns. Many may go and do likewise. Here lies a path, not as yet overcrowded, along which persevering folk may launch themselves, with a fair prospect of earning a just reward for their exertions. But even putting aside the idea of qualifying as a professional lecturer, every one should pay some attention to elocution; it will benefit every educated creature, even if seldom employed, and we never know when our powers of speech may be called into use.

In conclusion, we append the following list of works for the use of those readers who wish to go more deeply into the subject: Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, probably the most complete and correct work ever written on the subject; Blair's *Rhetoric*, very full and useful; Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*; Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric*, most judicious and appropriate for students; Serjeant Cox's *Art of Writing, Reading, and Speaking*, extremely interesting, for the use of more advanced students; Professor Hullah's *Cultivation of the Speaking Voice*, highly interesting and useful; Professor Plumptre's *Principles and Practice of Elocution considered in Reference to the Various Professions* (1861), practical and good; and also his *King's College Lectures on Elocution* (1883), which will be found to contain much practical advice. It is very complete, and gives many annotated selections in poetry and prose.

## RICHARD CABLE,

THE LIGHTSHIPMAN.

### CHAPTER XVI.—IN DOCK, OUT NETTLE.

'HA!' said Mr Gotham, 'there is the rector.—Excuse me, Josephine; I must leave you here. I have business with Mr Sellwood, and shall be with him a little while. You must walk home alone, or—get Mr Cable to escort you.' Then he hobbled, wheezing, to the rector, holding out his hand.

'If Miss Cornellis wishes an escort,' said the captain, who was with his father, 'I offer myself.'

'Thank you, Captain Sellwood; I accept it,' answered Josephine, and turned to go back to the Hall along the shore without another look or word for Richard Cable. It would not do for her further to favour him, after the gift of the vessel, especially in the presence of so many bystanders. She walked slowly along the shore beside the captain. On the right was the seawall for a little way, with a ditch behind it full of bulrushes, waving their red-brown heads. On the left, the flats of mud, with the tide running in the channels. Their feet were on the narrow strip of shingle, made up of flints, fragments of rolled chalk, and lumps of coral rag. A film of bleached seaweed and cast crab shells formed an almost unbroken fringe. A little further ahead was rising ground, broken banks covered with old oaks, under which, in spring, the bluebells abounded; they were now in flower, flushing with blue bloom the little slope. Here there was no seawall; there was no need for one. Beneath the bank was a long strip of coarse smooth grass, which went locally by the name

of the Bowling-green. This was only covered by high spring tides. It was perfectly level, and may at one time have been used in the way its name implied. It was not suitable for cricket, because it was narrow. Moreover, a spring oozed out of the bank, and became a swamp on the land side of the bowling-green. At the extremity of the green walk, this rill discharged itself into the sea; and there a few piles had been driven into the soft soil, on which the feet could rest whilst passing over to solid ground beyond. Then the sandy cliff—if cliff it can be called where no stone showed—ceased, dying away, and the seawall began again.

Captain Sellwood walked beside Josephine without saying much, and she was too much occupied with her thoughts to desire conversation. When, however, they came on the Bowling-green, the only picturesque bit of the coast, where utter flatness and mud did not force themselves on notice, Captain Sellwood worked himself up to converse.

'It is a fine day, to-day.'

'Yes; I perceive it is so.'

'I am sorry so many of the old oaks here have been cut down.'

'I also am sorry. We cannot afford, on this coast, to part with a single element of beauty. He who pollards a willow or destroys an oak should be stoned to death.'

'We should have to send over to Kent for the stones, as we produce none on the spot.'

They walked on a little farther in silence; then the captain said: 'I may not have such another opportunity, Miss Cornellis, so I seize on this for a few private'—

'Oh, Captain Sellwood! in pity spare me. I have had two keelhauls already to-day; first by your father, and then by Mr Gotham.'

'I am not going to keelhaul you.'

'Then let us have no private and confidential communications. Do look at the bluebells, and admire the mixture of red-robin, also the occasional speckle of stellaria.'

'I must speak to you, Miss Cornellis. The happiness of my life depends on the answer'—

Again she interrupted him; she was nervous, annoyed. She suspected at once what he was about to say, and was unprepared for it. She had not thought of Algernon Sellwood except as a butt for her ridicule, the slow man who had nothing to say for himself, the Morbid Fly.

'Mr Sellwood,' she said hastily, 'we are old acquaintances, I may almost say friends. You are about to assume the privilege of a friend, and lecture me for my imprudence the other night. I have committed another imprudence to-day: I have made a present of the new boat Messrs Grimes and Newbold are building, to Richard Cable, because he saved my worthless life; and—here is the absurdity of the situation—I have not a penny wherewith to pay for the vessel. It was ordered when I thought myself rich, and I have woke up to the fact that I am a pauper. I am going out as a governess; no—I could not endure the children—as a seamstress or milliner, or something of the sort, to earn my bread.'

'Is this possible, Miss Josephine?'

'It is certain, Captain Sellwood. My father

has had terrible losses; and *my* money—I mean what my mother left—that is all lost also; so that we are left as mere barnacles, clinging to Cousin Gotham.

‘Dear Miss Josephine, as this is so, it only makes me more resolved to proceed.’

‘Do you know what it is to be a barnacle, Captain Sellwood? To have all the faculties of the mind concentrated on suction?—No; you do not. I have read in some book of natural history that the barnacle is a nautilus, provided with silver wings, to sail on the surface of the summer sea; but as it gets battered by winds and upset by waves, it draws in its glittering sails and sinks and attaches itself to a stump or a keel; absorbs its wings, or converts them into a proboscis or foot, or whatever it is by which it can adhere, and is degraded at once utterly and for ever from a nautilus to a barnacle. Well—we have furl’d our wings, doff’d our mother-of-pearl lustre, and have become scaly and purple, and begun to taste of coppers; we have lost all our independence, and are converted into parasites.’

‘Dear Miss Josephine,’ said the captain, ‘you are throwing me off, trying at least to do so; but you shall not divert me from my purpose. I must speak.’

‘What about? My folly the night of the fire? Oh, Captain Sellwood, I would not have believed it, unless convinced by my eyes, that you could in an emergency be so ready. How spiritedly you went over the pales! Was your light overcoat much torn? The wood bristles with hooks like a teasel. And your sense of *les convenances* was as much lacerated as your overcoat by my preposterous behaviour.’

‘I beg your pardon, Miss Cornellis; you explained how you came on the wall, and that was enough. Neither my father nor I had the slightest right to ask an explanation. When you gave us one, we accepted it as final.’

‘Not your father—he refused to receive it. He has done so again to-day.’

‘I received it; I have not presumed to question it.’

‘You are more charitable than even your father.’

‘Towards you, there is no call for charity.’

‘You think better of me than does either your father or my cousin Gotham.’

‘I think the very best of you. I know that you are incapable of doing anything which could make me regard you otherwise than with respect, as I do—he paused, and then said in a low tone—‘and with love.’

‘With friendship,’ corrected Josephine. ‘I thank you for your kindly estimate; it is more generous than I deserve. Come—what do you think of my conduct of giving away a ship to Mr Cable when I have not the money to pay for it? Is not that a swindle?’

‘I think, Miss Josephine, that your generosity outruns your judgment, whether in the matter of ships or of crackers.’

‘I thank you for your kind opinion,’ she said, touched at his consideration. She had laughed at him as silent and dull, yet now he spoke well and easily. She might possibly have yielded to a warmer feeling, had she not recalled her father’s words, and remembered that he had schemed that she should take the captain. Her rebellious

temper at once rose, and she said: ‘You only half know me. I am like the palings, full of hooks and spikes; those whom I catch I tear; those who rest a hand on me, I pierce with wounds.’

‘Miss Josephine, when you were a child and played Blindman’s Buff, when caught, you wriggled, and wrenched, and ducked till you had corkscrewed your way out of the grasp of the Blind Man. You are trying the same game with me now; but it will not succeed. I have come here determined to say what I have at heart and to know your answer.’

‘I give you the answer at once, before you ask the question. It is conditional.—Does your father hold me in as high esteem as yourself?’

He hesitated. My father is the most kind of men.’

‘And yet,’ said Josephine, ‘he thinks ill of me. He does not approve of your speaking to me to-day. I know he does not.—Say no more. Your father must think of me as you profess to think, before I listen to another word of what you have at heart.’

‘You will not hear me out?’

‘No; I have ducked and eluded your grasp. Yonder is the path to the rectory. I am going home, sir, and need no further escort.’ Then she burst into a merry laugh.

‘What is the joke?’ asked the captain with a reproachful look in his great dark eyes. ‘Is it a joke, Miss Cornellis, that a man should have laid his heart at your feet and you should have trodden on it?’

‘How serious you are, Captain Sellwood!’ she said, the laugh dying on her lips. ‘Excuse me, if I see droll similitudes. You are generally so silent, and have so little to say when we talk on common matters, and now you are eloquent.’

‘Because it is not a common matter on which we speak.’

‘No; you are like the gannet. I had a tame one in the garden for some time. It could not fly because it was on level ground. It flapped its wings against the grass and waddled. One day I set the bird on the top of a high wall; at once it precipitated itself into the air, and away it flew, and soared, and was speedily out of sight. The solan goose is incapable of doing more than flap and waddle when on a level; it must be on high to be able to start for a flight. Is not that like yourself, Captain Sellwood? Have I hurt you? *Gare la cheville barbelée!* I warned you against the spikes and crooked nails.—There is your path, and this way lies mine.’

He obeyed her, and went along the path through the clover field she indicated. She looked after him, and at once regretted that she had spoken about the solan goose. It was not kind, after his deference to her. They had known each other for years, and she had often challenged him with her jokes, and laughed because he was slow to respond, or, to speak more truly, incapable of responding. She had carried her joke too far; she had indeed wounded the man when he had shown her a good and generous heart. As he opened it to her, she had struck it. Did she dislike him? No; she had a regard for him—not a keen one; he had never interested her; but as a member of a



worthy and well-to-do family she respected him; as an old associate of childhood she liked him. That was all. Regard, respect, liking, went no further. Only to-day did she see that there was in him more than showed in common life. Only now did she perceive that in him was that which might convert negative regard into positive affection. She felt tempted to run after him and say: 'I am sorry, Captain Sellwood, that I spoke about the gannet and made fun of you. I was in a perverse mood.'

But her pride would not suffer her to do this. If she had done this, he would have forgiven her immediately, as she well knew, as also that he would immediately have pursued his advantage and proposed fully to her. She did not wish that. She did not know her own mind. It was true she did not love him, but she loved no one. If she must marry, Captain Sellwood was harmless; and a husband who would not be exacting and promised docility might suit her better than another. She had made a mistake again. She had treated a serious offer with levity. She had met it in an improper spirit; and she had insulted the man who had shown her the most generous trust, in spite of appearances to her disadvantage.

It was her fate to be always saying and doing the wrong things. Why was she so wayward in heart that she revolted against those who proposed to lead her and against anything suggested to her? The reason she did not know. The reason was that from childhood she had seen only falseness, and had contracted suspicion against her father, her aunt, against every one and everything, so that the natural truthfulness of her nature was in a chronic condition of hedgehog with bristles erect. She was perverse because she wanted to go straight where all was crooked, and when she came among those who were sincere and honourable, she was unable at once to take her direction. There are conditions of the body in which the eyesight is disturbed, and sees the air full of floating black spots. The eye may look into the purest of skies, but the vision is blurred with these sailing stains, as clouds of midges. It is so with the mental vision; when the spirit is not in good health, it also sees obscurely, and its vision is full of deceptive black spots. It was thus with Josephine. The moment the captain was gone, she knew that she had behaved badly; she had seen only the ridiculous in him, and that she had thrown away a chance which she ought not to have cast aside unconsidered. When we are troubled with floating black specks, we know at once that we need a tonic or an alterative dose. We consult a doctor, and are uncomfortable till these irritating black spots clear from our sight, and we can look our neighbours in the face, or into the silver summer cloud, without seeing that disturbing drift. But we are not so anxious to correct the moral vision; and we are content to look at all who surround us, and see these specks, and let them thicken and become multitudinous, without an effort to dispel them, and—here is the singularity of the case—we do not seem aware that the spots are not where we look, but in ourselves. It is our own disordered mind which sends them up as a cloud of midges from a stagnant pool.

Josephine was startled out of her brown-study by a hare that dashed over the seawall and ran splashing through the water athwart the mud-flats, towards the sea. Quite small matters sometimes divert our minds from great considerations, and it was so now with Josephine. She looked round, and saw that the captain in crossing the clover field had disturbed the hare, and the creature raced away towards the open sea.

'You poor fool,' she said, 'flying from an imaginary danger, you are running to your death.'

The captain had no gun. A race of water, now shallow, lay between the flats and the shore. Unless the hare returned immediately, the rising tide would intercept it before the flats were flooded.

She looked after the hare till she could see it no more. Then she walked on to the willows, and, feeling tired, not so much from walking as from worry of mind, she seated herself on the little plank bridge, with her feet hanging above the placid water of the dike. The dike was here broad and deep. Along the coast, a channel behind the seawall receives the drainage from the land, and at intervals discharges itself into the sea through sluices so contrived that the rising tide closes the doors. When, however, the sea has fallen, then the pressure of the fresh water behind opens the sluices, and the stream pours away down a channel it has cut for itself and also paved for itself with pebbles, lying between the clay banks. One such channel extended from the dike to the open sea at the end of Cable's garden. Up channels such as this, boats can approach the shore, and in such channels bathers disport themselves without fear of sinking in the mud, because of the pebbly floor. The tide was out, consequently there was movement in the moat; all the blossoming, white, yellow-centred water-plantain was drifting one way with the current. By the margin, the pink flowering rush stooped in the same direction.

Josephine's head was throbbing and hot; she removed her hat, and bending down to the water, gathered a couple of handfuls of plantain, and filled her hat with it and put it on her head. The cold wet leaves and flowers sent freshness into her heated brain; the water ran down her cheeks, her hair, and over her forehead. She sat still, enjoying the coolness, resolving, when the leaves had spent their freshness, to replace them with others. Then Richard Cable came to the plank end and said: 'You here, miss! What are you doing?' Then seeing the moisture on her cheeks: 'Surely not crying?'

'In dock, out nettle,' answered Josephine. 'I am drawing the fire out of my brain with water-plants.'

'Still troubled with bad thoughts, Miss Cornellis?'

'Always. I cannot get rid of them—always stinging and burning; and I am angry with myself to-day; I have done so many foolish things.—There; these plantains give me no more ease.' She took off her hat and threw out the crushed herbs.—'Am I in your path? Do you want to go by, Mr Cable?'

'No,' said he. 'Do not let me disturb you. Is your head very hot?'

'Like a coal of fire.'

Then he put his rough sailor hand on her head;

but though the hand was rough, the touch was gentle as if a plantain leaf had lighted on it.

'Hold your hand there,' said Josephine; 'it is better than the dripping leaves.'

'Do you remember what I said to you a little while ago?' he asked, still with his hand on her throbbing head.

'What?' she asked, without stirring.

'It was anent the ladder, miss. You will never have a cool head and walk with steady heart till you can do that.'

'Do what?' she asked again, and did not move her head.

'Please, miss,' he said, his rough voice lowered and becoming soft, 'when I was a little chap, I was sent up the shrouds in a gale of wind. When I was aloft, I looked down, and it seemed as if I was lost—the sea was like as if it was rising to swallow me, and the ship was heeling over, and I must fall and be drowned. My head went round like a teetotum, and my heart sank into my shoes. I should have let go and gone overboard, and there'd have been no Dicky Cable alive now; but the mate—he saw what was up, and he shouted to me: *Look aloft, lad—look aloft*; and I did, miss.—You'll excuse if I'm forward. No imper-tinence meant, miss.'

He withdrew his hand, and the fire came back into her brain.

'I cannot,' she said; 'indeed, I cannot. I have not the power.'

#### THE BLACK REPUBLIC.

THE statement that at the present day, in a presumably civilised and professedly Christian state, the horrible practice of cannibalism should be a matter of by no means rare occurrence, is, to say the least of it, rather startling. And besides, what adds to the greatness of the crime is the fact that it is not caused by any lack of food, but is practised purely as an accompaniment to one of the most degraded forms of 'fetich' worship.

The republic of Hayti, where these obnoxious rites are said to be freely observed, was till recent times comparatively a *terra incognita* to the majority of English readers. Thanks to Sir Spenser St John (*Hayti, or the Black Republic*, published by Smith, Elder, & Co.), the veil has now been lifted, and we are presented with a picture which, in its awful depth of depravity and superstition, is positively appalling. Hayti, once upon a time one of the fairest gems in the colonial empire of France, has, since the date of its independence, been steadily pursuing a retrograde path, and seems destined to lapse, in the not very remote future, into a condition of complete barbarism. The natural savage instinct of the African race is every year asserting itself with greater vigour; and the nineteenth century may yet possibly behold the melancholy spectacle of one of the finest islands in the West Indies becoming little better than one of the most demoralised heathen states in the dark continent of Africa. The frequent revolutions and protracted civil wars to which the republic is subject, are no doubt among the principal causes of this rapid decadence. Foreign capital and enterprise have been driven from the land.

Though blessed with a soil seldom equalled in fertility, agriculture is almost totally neglected. Frequent fires—often the work of incendiaries—devastate the towns, and the ravages of the conflagrations are seldom repaired. The fine public buildings and splendid town and country mansions of the planters, which were pretty numerous some years ago, are now things of the past. Dreadful massacres and the fanatical hatred of the blacks, have forced the white population to flee from the country and seek safer domiciles elsewhere. With the exception of the representatives of foreign powers, very few white persons are to be found living for any length of time in Hayti.

Another cause of this wretched state of decadence is the intense hatred existing between the black and coloured inhabitants. By the latter designation, the mulatto or mixed portion of the community is meant; but the former are in far the greatest numbers; and the mulattos, through intermarriage with those of purer African descent, are slowly but surely 'breeding back' to the original negro stock. For the mixed race there might have been some hope, as they occasionally developed some good characteristics, and showed themselves capable of attaining at least a certain degree of civilisation; but in the case of the pure blacks, who have now completely the upper hand in the management of affairs, the result seems hopeless.

There are many revelations in Sir Spenser St John's volume which are sufficiently alarming; but certainly the most startling of all is the account of the pagan practices of the negroes, accompanied, as they too often are, by the disgusting additions of human sacrifices and cannibalism. 'Vaudoux' worship—a species of heathen religion founded on the rites observed amongst the most degraded of African tribes—is carried on with unblushing openness over the whole country. Nominally a Christian state, this pagan practice pervades all classes of society; and the authorities seem to think it is not their business—or interest, rather—to put it down. There are laws against it; but these are rarely put in force; and this is scarcely to be wondered at when it is known that the great mass of the population are disciples of the Vaudoux. The highest government officials, from the President downwards, are frequently known to have been votaries of this degraded form of religion. Vaudoux worship, as usually observed, is not supposed to be accompanied by human sacrifices, and in the majority of cases is free from this crime. Nevertheless, the practice *does* take place; and many well-authenticated instances are given of its occurrence at recent celebrations, with the additional horror of cannibalism as part of the programme. These obscene rites are chiefly observed in the country districts, in some carefully selected spot, not likely to be discovered by profane eyes; and the greatest care is taken that none but the initiated should be present. The more common form of worship is celebrated quite openly, and the sacrifices confined to the slaying of a white cock or goat. It is only at the secret assemblies of the Vaudoux votaries that this harmless sacrifice is dispensed with, and a substitute provided in the shape of the 'goat without horns.' This latter expression is

the common phrase in use for designating a human victim.

In the time of the French occupation of the country, Vaudoux worship was quite common among the slaves; but the offering of human victims seems to have been unknown. This fact alone is only too significant of the terrible pace at which this fair isle of the West is degenerating into a savage condition, coupled with heathen observances of the most obnoxious kind. The worship of the Vaudoux is evidently a relic of former days in the African wilds, and has been handed down from one generation to another, until now it is a strange mixture of paganism adorned with portions of the ceremonies of the Romish Church. It is a form of serpent-worship, and a large species of harmless snake which abounds in Hayti is the supposed object of adoration. This reptile is confined in a sparr'd box, and carefully tended by a priest and priestess, who are variously known as King and Queen, Master and Mistress, or Papa and Mamma. The Vaudoux rites are always celebrated at dead of night and in profound secrecy. A room is prepared with a sort of altar at one end, under which is placed the box containing the sacred serpent, and of which those who wish can have a glimpse through the front bars of the cage. Fearful vows are taken or renewed by the worshippers; and after various preliminary ceremonies are gone through, each one who wishes can approach and request the aid of the Vaudoux for whatever purpose he most requires it. The answer to his request comes, of course, through the medium of the King or Queen, and is sometimes favourable, sometimes the reverse, and occasionally ambiguous, like all oracles. After this, there is generally a collection taken of the offerings of the votaries, no doubt to the King and his consort the most important part of the night's proceedings. New candidates are initiated into the mysteries, and dances of the most excited character engaged in. The victim is slain, and whether it be goat, fowl, or child, the warm blood is caught in bowls, and eagerly drunk by these wretched deluded creatures. Intoxicating liquor is freely circulated, and promiscuous dances kept up till all are utterly exhausted; and generally the whole affair winds up with a scene of indescribable debauchery. Such is a very faint and mild account of Vaudoux worship as observed in the republic of Hayti. Those who wish more information on the subject, or of other details concerning the present state of this semi-savage black community, will find their curiosity amply gratified in the volume before us. Numerous well-attested cases of cannibalism are given; and though the Haytians are loth to admit the accusation, the facts are too clear to admit of being doubted.

In several instances, parties have been brought to trial for participation in these cannibalistic orgies; but it is almost impossible to get the culprits convicted and condignly punished. And no wonder, considering the vast ramification through all classes of society of the Vaudoux creed. As before stated, from the highest to the lowest, Vaudouxism can claim its adherents. Possibly the very men trying the cases may be members themselves of the villainous association. The administration of the penal laws

in Hayti is a farce; and it is an exceedingly difficult thing to get a conviction against a black man or woman, unless some high official has a personal desire or reason that they should be punished. Crimes committed on white people are laughed at, and the killing of a white man is positively looked upon as an action worthy of emulation. President Salnave—who was at the head of affairs in 1867—in order to please the masses and regain his fading authority, went openly to consult a Vaudoux priest, and actually went through the ceremonies requisite to become an initiated member of the society. He was anointed with the blood of a goat, made handsome offerings to the priest, and then joined in the usual debauchery which almost invariably ends the performances. But the fates continuing adverse, and his cause rapidly declining, he again went to consult the oracle. He was then informed that all would go well with him if he went through the highest form of the sacred mysteries, and participated in the sacrifice of the 'goat without horns' and its horrible attendant orgies. Whether he consented or not is a disputed point; his enemies declare he did, and certainly a man who went the length he is known to have done, would not likely shrink from anything, however atrocious, if he thought he could bolster up his fast-fading authority and secure a victory over his opponents by so doing.

Several instances of white persons being present in disguise at Vaudoux celebrations are related, and the sacrifice of the 'goat without horns' witnessed. A child is usually kidnapped for the purpose, though instances have been known where it was suspected the parents themselves were cognisant of the murder. The widow of a missionary who, owing to civil war, was obliged to reside for a lengthened period in a remote part of the country, declares that to her personal knowledge, human sacrifices were frequent, and, what is scarcely credible, states that human flesh was openly sold in the village markets! The power held over the people by the Vaudoux priests is enormous, and no one would dare to disobey their commands, or even show the least opposition to their wishes. During the reign of the Emperor Soulouque, a priestess was arrested for performing a sacrifice *too openly*! On her way to prison, a foreigner remarked in her hearing that she would be sure to be executed. The woman laughed, and said: 'If I were to beat the sacred drum and march through the city, not one from the emperor downwards but would humbly follow me!' She was put in prison, but was never known to have undergone any punishment whatever, far less reaping a well-deserved fate by being shot, this being the mode in which the death sentence is carried out in all cases.

So much for Vaudoux worship and its attendant horrors, which has gained such a power in the Haytian republic, that the authorities are unable, and probably unwilling, to attempt its suppression. The state of affairs is fast becoming unbearable, and will likely end in one or other of the European or American powers stepping in and putting a stop to what is a disgrace to Christendom.

The Haytians are an intensely vain people, and the thing they most pride themselves on is



their army. Nothing will convince them that as a military power they are not vastly superior to any nation either in the Old or New World. Even those who have lived in European capitals are addicted to this extremely ridiculous 'balderdash;' but when the real facts are presented, the state of affairs disclosed is simply sublime in its absurdity. The Haytian army must present to European beholders a spectacle of grotesqueness, the equal of which it would be difficult to find anywhere either in fact or fiction. Imagine a battalion on parade consisting of thirteen privates, ten officers, and six drummers!—the rest of the men—as the author quaintly puts it—thinking it unnecessary to present themselves except on pay-day. The staff-officers are clad in the most gorgeous uniforms procurable; while the men are habited in a motley array of tatters. Some have coats wanting one arm, the collar, or the tail; the headgear may consist of a dilapidated shako, a straw-hat, wideawake, or in many cases merely a handkerchief tied round the head. The officers hold their swords in either hand as suits them; and the men march past in admirable confusion, each one carrying his musket in the position he finds most convenient. The populace look on with admiring looks, and gravely ask if finer troops can anywhere be found. The Haytian black, however, thoroughly detests military service, and consequently the sentries, lest they should be over-fatigued, are considerably provided with chairs!

Robbery of state funds and all other kinds of corruption are of course to be expected among all government officials, the main object of every one being to 'feather his nest' while he has the chance, as there may be a revolution any day and his opportunity gone. This common trait in the character of their authorities excites no surprise or indignation in the breasts of the easy-going Haytian blacks; and if any one who had the opportunity of becoming rich at the expense of the state were to neglect it, he would not rise one particle in the opinion of his countrymen. On the contrary, he would be considered a person of very small ability, and unanimously voted 'a fool for his pains.' A favourite saying in this republic of blacks is: 'Prendre l'argent de l'état, ce n'est pas volé' (To take government money is not robbery).

The Haytian creed of both political and personal morals is certainly not particularly strict in either profession or practice.

### THE BRANCHTOWN BALL.

#### IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CONCLUSION.

EVA looked so exceedingly well in her fur cape and bright-winged hat, as her mother and she set forth, escorted by His Grace, that it was almost excusable in him to devote himself entirely to her, leaving her mother to entertain herself. A fine brisk breeze met them as they passed the turnstile, and stepped on the seemingly endless planking of the long pier. The sea was choppy, but beautifully blue. To the left lay Mudport, with its land and water forts, and the forest of masts in the harbour. A gunboat was anchored at a safe distance, and was firing

for practice at some unseen mark, the sullen boom of the cannon and puff of white smoke recurring ever and anon.

'There's an ironclad coming round the Point,' remarked Eva, as they reached the end of the pier. 'I wonder what she is? I heard the *Clio* was expected back to-day.'

'Oh, there are the Greenes!' exclaimed her mother in a vexed tone.—'Don't stop, Eva, if they speak to us. I don't want to have those girls foisted upon me for the rest of the afternoon.'

'If the *Clio* is in, that means good news for Bertie,' remarked her daughter with a significant smile. 'No; they don't see us. They are going away; I suppose they've had enough of this wind.'

'You ought to come to Branchtown in your yacht next summer, duke,' said Mrs Armitage-Maxwell, trying to keep her teeth from chattering.

'Yes, and enter her for some of the races,' said Eva gaily, her heart leaping at seeing a certain manly form coming swiftly down the pier. 'It would be such fun! Branchtown in race-week is very gay, and I'm always sorry when it's over.'

'Yes, you must come again, and renew your acquaintance with Branchtown,' said the widow, putting up her umbrella to keep off a little of the cutting wind. Just then a voice behind her said: 'How do you do?' and she turned to see Bertie Fleming.

It cannot be said that her greeting to him was very cordial, but the soft pressure of Eva's fingers was eloquence itself. The duke curtsy nodded to the young officer, and walked on with Eva, as if determined to keep his pretty companion to himself. Poor Bertie found himself compelled to make himself agreeable to Mrs Armitage-Maxwell, who purposely lagged behind, out of earshot. Eva looked round at them over her shoulder once or twice, as if to say: 'Why don't you walk faster?' but her mother was too knowing for that.

'Those two always have so much to say to each other!' she sweetly remarked to her companion.

'I was not aware that the duke possessed such very great conversational powers,' answered the lieutenant dryly, quickening his pace.

'How pretty the sea is this afternoon!' said the widow, standing still, so as to better appreciate the beauties of nature.—'May I ask you to be so good as to hold my umbrella for me? I am afraid of the wind for my neuralgia; and if I hold it myself, I cannot keep my hands in my muff.' And having thus cleverly insured his keeping pace with her, she strolled on serenely, her unwilling cavalier chafing at her side.

'I hear that you are talking of going over the dockyard to-morrow,' began Bertie, after a short silence.

'Yes, we are. The duke wishes to see it.'

'What time shall you go? I should like to join you, if I may.'

Her handsome face assumed a very forbidding expression. 'We are going by special invitation from Admiral Conway, Mr Fleming.'

'I met him in the train just now, and he



said that a party of you were coming over to-morrow to have luncheon at Government House, and see the dockyard afterwards; and if I or any of our fellows liked to come, he'd be very glad to see us,' answered Bertie a little defiantly. 'If you like, I'll meet you at the Mudport station with a cab, and we could all drive to the Admiral's together.'

'The duke is going with us; he will see to all that,' she answered stiffly. 'There is no occasion to trouble you.'

'It would be no trouble.—But perhaps you would rather I didn't come?'

She was not the woman to lose such an opportunity. 'Since you have asked the question, Mr Fleming, I candidly confess that I would rather you did not come—on Eva's account.'

'I suppose I should be in the way of the duke?'

'I think that as a man of honour you ought to cease from paying attentions to Eva which can only be to her disadvantage. The child has no fortune, and with your circumstances as they are, what use is it to think of marriage? You cannot blame me for being anxious to see my dear girl well settled in life.'

'Has the duke proposed to her, then?' he demanded hotly.

'Hush!—Not quite so loud, please. No; he has not proposed, but he may do so any day; and I think in the meantime he would rather you did not go with us to-morrow. Honestly, I don't think he likes you.'

'I can assure him the animosity is mutual,' he answered, grinding his teeth. 'Do you imagine he could ever make your daughter happy?'

'Of course he can! Why, she will have everything a woman can want. It is so miserable to be poor!'

'I'm sure I wish I were as rich as Croesus, for her sake,' he answered passionately; 'but, as it seems that I am only in the way at present, I will promise to keep away until the duke takes his departure, and then perhaps matters may come back to their old footing.'

'Don't let us quarrel,' she said with angelic sweetness, prepared to give him a sugar-plum or two now that she had gained all she wanted—a clear course for His Grace. 'I should be very sorry to do that. What I have said is all for your good. It is no kindness to allow you to cherish false hopes.'

With a heavy heart the young officer walked mechanically with the widow to the turnstile, in the wake of the others; and then, with a mute, pitiful glance at Eva, he shook hands, muttered something about having a train to catch, and left them.

The next morning was gloriously bright and sunny, and in due course Eva and her mother and the duke arrived at Mudport. About a dozen guests were present at the luncheon at the Admiral's house. That distinguished officer entertained them genially, and recited all his best stories of the Crimea and the Chinese War for the duke's edification. Then, after sitting for a few minutes with Mrs Conway in the spacious drawing-room, crammed with curious mementos of voyages in many seas, they all adjourned to the dockyard, which was close by. The general public who wished to see it had to write their

names in a big ledger in a kind of office at the gate; and after being scrutinised by some twenty policemen, they were told off in batches under the guidance of a constable, who allowed them only a limited view of the wonders of the place. It was quite another thing to be ciceroned by the Admiral-Superintendent. A general touching of caps and extreme deference was accorded to the great man, and his party saw everything. First they visited a large workshop smelling delightfully of newly-cut wood, and witnessed the interesting process of block-making, by which square billets of wood were turned, grooved, pierced, and smoothed in an incredibly short time. They went to the masts, where were great stores of spare masts for half the ironclads in the fleet. Being of iron and hollow, many of them were so large that a man could have stood upright inside them. Another shed was filled with enormous anchors; and a little farther on was a dry dock, in which a colossal ironclad was building, with a most delightful sound of iron hammers ringing on her metal sides—surely the most exhilarating sound in the world. They visited a storehouse filled with Whitehead torpedoes—deadly monsters, in the shape of shining metal fish about six feet long, with sharply pointed snouts, and delicately formed tails—the queerest fish that ever swam the seas.

The ladies manifested much terror at these uncanny creatures, and backing towards the door, asked the Admiral if he was quite sure they wouldn't 'go off.' The genial old tar laughed at their fears, and led the way to the smithy—a vast, dimly-lighted, resounding building, where the glow of twenty huge furnaces, the flying sparks, the army of brawny smiths in leather aprons, and the great blocks of metal in every stage of manufacture, made up a picture worthy of Rembrandt. After a word or two with one of the men, the admiral informed his visitors that they were just in time to witness a most interesting sight—a monstrous mass of iron, intended for an immense anchor, being operated upon by a Nasmyth hammer. Drawing back to a safe distance, they saw the huge piece of metal, red-hot and glowing most brilliantly, lifted from a furnace by an enormous crane, and deposited on a gigantic anvil, above which the mighty hammer was poised in mid-air. Down came the Titanic implement, and struck the glowing mass with a thud, making the sparks fly. Again the hammer rose and prepared to descend. The duke, standing by the Admiral, was looking with open mouth, while the ladies peeped timidly over the shoulders of the gentlemen. The Admiral was explaining, in a voice loud enough to be heard in a typhoon, on account of the noise, the processes necessary for the completion of the anchor.

'When the metal is sufficiently cooled, duke, it is placed'—

He paused. A party of ordinary tourists, under the convoy of a policeman, had entered the smithy by another door at the same time as themselves, and were watching the same operation at a very respectful distance from the more distinguished visitors. They were quiet, inoffensive, well-dressed people, and the Admiral would not have noticed their presence, had not one of them, a young man of three or four and twenty, in a well-fitting suit of tweed, been gradually

nearing the official party, until now he stood quite close to the duke, and seemed evidently desirous of overhearing what was said.

Such bad manners irritated the old sailor exceedingly. In the dockyard, he was supreme, and he liked his authority to be properly recognised. So, thinking he had to deal with an 'Arry who did not know his proper place, and deserved a rebuke for his intrusiveness, he said wrathfully: 'I don't know if you are aware, sir, that I am the Admiral-Superintendent of the dockyard, and that these ladies and gentlemen are my personal friends. The policeman in charge of your party will give you any information you may require, and—and, in short, sir, your presence here is an intrusion.'

The policeman in charge of the party, perfectly aghast at the young man's audacity, had crossed over, and was standing just behind the intruder, ready to walk him back unceremoniously.

'Excuse me, Admiral,' said the new-comer, lifting his hat with courtly grace, and speaking with the polished intonation of a perfect gentleman, so that the choleric old sailor was mollified in spite of himself. 'I have no wish to intrude upon you and your friends; but I see an individual here whom I recognise, and on his account I must say a few words. May I ask you this—gentleman's—name?' As he spoke, he indicated the duke, who had shrunk back among the wondering ladies, as if he wished to get out of sight. The Admiral, glancing at his distinguished visitor, saw with astonishment that his face was of a ghastly whiteness.

'The Duke of Ambleside,' answered the old sailor in amazement.

The new-comer gave a merry, boyish laugh. 'I fancied I heard you call him "duke," although I could hardly believe my ears. This individual is no other than a very worthless valet of mine, dismissed from my service some weeks ago. I am the Duke of Ambleside.—So he has been passing himself off for me?'

'Yes, he has—the scoundrel!' said the admiral, turning upon the wretched jackdaw in peacock's plumes with a threatening gesture.

'Well, William Jeffreys, what have you to say for yourself?' went on the lawful owner of De Courcy Castle. It was noteworthy that, although they had only his bare assertion that he was the real Duke of Ambleside, nobody dreamed of doubting it, in spite of the presence of a previous claimant to that title. There could be no greater contrast than that between the two young men; the one, erect of bearing, easy-mannered, courteous, with the unmistakable air of a gentleman; the other, vulgar, craven, abject, the most pitiful of impostors.

With cowardly subservience, the sham duke actually flung himself at his master's feet and grovelled there on the stones. 'Oh, your Grace, have mercy on me! Don't, don't punish me!'

'Don't kneel to me, you pitiful hound!' was the answer, given with righteous scorn.—'Get up!' added the young nobleman imperiously.

'Forgive me, your Grace! Forgive me, and I'll never do so again!' whined the reptile, struggling to his feet.

'No, that I'll engage you never will!' returned the duke with curt decision.—'Take him in charge, policeman!' he added, turning to his guide, who

had all this time remained a passive spectator of the scene, his helmeted figure being no doubt an object of additional terror to the detected impostor.—'I forgave you, Jeffreys, when I caught you pawning my jewelry, and promised not to prosecute; but as you have abused my clemency in this way, you shall answer for everything, and to prison you go.—No; not another word! I won't hear it!' And he turned his back on the cringing valet, who, still begging frantically for mercy, was led off by the policeman.

'And now, Admiral,' said the young duke with a sunny smile, turning to the old sailor, 'allow me to apologise to you and these ladies for the very unpleasant scene I have been compelled to make. I felt as if I could not lose a moment in unmasking the rascal.'

'Rascal indeed!' said the Admiral angrily. 'To think of his imposing on us all, and passing himself off as a member of the aristocracy! He deserves stringing up at the yardarm!'

'How long has he been carrying on this game?' asked the duke, walking by the Admiral's side as the party left the smithy.

The old sailor in reply gave him an account of his valet's brief fashionable career; after which the duke explained how it happened that he made his appearance at that particular moment. 'When I dismissed that fellow from my service, I was about to start for the Mediterranean in a friend's yacht. Jeffreys was aware that I should probably not return for six months at least, as we intended to visit Algeria and Egypt; so I suppose he thought he might safely pass himself off for me in a neighbourhood where I was not known. But we had scarcely reached Lisbon, when my friend was taken very ill, and had to be landed there; and we all dispersed. I took a passage back in the mail-steamer for England, and arrived here this morning. I joined a party of my fellow-passengers who wished to see the dockyard, and was walking about with them, when I happened to catch sight of that fellow's face. I knew him directly, in spite of his fashionable get-up.'

So the British aristocracy vindicated itself in Eva's eyes. The real duke was just as unaffected, cultivated, and agreeable, as the counterfeit had been ignorant, conceited, and overbearing.

The excitement which the news caused at Branchtown defies description. The people were so enraged at having been duped by a vulgar impostor, that, had they had the power, they would have torn him limb from limb. The tradespeople were heavy losers, for he had obtained quantities of expensive things from them on credit. The private residents, also, had in many instances lent him small sums; for he had a habit of pretending that he had forgotten his purse, and had thus obtained a good deal of money from unsuspecting people, who were glad to oblige such a distinguished individual with the loan of five pounds or so.

Imagine poor Mrs Armitage-Maxwell's feelings! The hope of a brilliant marriage for Eva dashed to the ground; an expense incurred for which her means were quite inadequate; and herself the laughing-stock of the whole town, by reason of the slavish adulation she had bestowed upon an audacious trickster: it was little wonder that

she took to her bed, quite ill with disappointment and mortification. Lady Borwick and the rest of the leaders of Branchtown society were not less indignant and humiliated; and the result was that a second ball never took place, and Mrs Armitage-Maxwell's brilliant project of a series of dances at other people's expense proved an ignominious failure.

From that hour, pretty Eva was known as 'The Duchess of Ambleside' in Branchtown. It was so galling to her mother, that she could scarcely bear to stay in the place. Perhaps she would not have remained, had not Bertie Fleming come forward with the offer of his hand. A distant relative, whom he had never seen, had recently bequeathed him, not exactly a fortune, but quite enough to live comfortably upon, and Mrs Armitage-Maxwell did not offer a single objection. Perhaps her brief experience of the parvenu aristocrat made her better able to appreciate Bertie's real worth.

Mr William Jeffreys was sentenced to a year's imprisonment. He confessed that, having some money in his pocket when he was dismissed the duke's service, he decided to see a little of the world before seeking another situation. By the merest chance he came to Branchtown, and empty vanity induced him to pass himself off for his master during the day or two he intended to remain. His assumed title, however, created a far greater sensation than he had expected, and he found the adulation of the people so pleasant, that he was induced to prolong his stay. One thing led to another. He had not sufficient cleverness to make a very superior swindler, and he at first only proposed to get what he could from the local tradesmen while his credit lasted, and be off before he was detected. But a girl's pretty face, and his own vanity, beguiled him into carrying the game too far.

We think both swindlers and honest people might find a moral or two for their guidance in the unlooked-for results of the Branchtown Ball.

#### NOVEL USES OF PAPER.

THERE are few things that cannot now be made out of paper. Its adaptability is astonishing, and the wildest speculations as to its future are excusable when we reflect upon the present uses of this material. As the delicate substance can be made to serve for steel or iron, it is not difficult to understand how paper is for many purposes now taking the place of wood. Mention was before made of a new mill in Sweden for the manufacture of paper from moss. Paper of different thicknesses, and pasteboard made of the white moss, have already been shown, the latter even in sheets three-quarters of an inch thick. It is as hard as wood, and can be easily painted and polished. It has all the good qualities, but none of the defects of wood. The pasteboard can consequently be used for door and window frames, architectural ornaments, and all kinds of furniture.

Paper made from strong fibres, such as linen, can, in fact, be compressed into a substance so hard that it cannot almost be scratched. As houses have been made of this novel building

material, so almost everything requisite to complete and furnish a residence has since been manufactured of paper. After the Breslau fireproof chimney, it is quite possible, for instance, that cooking or heating stoves can be made of similar materials. These paper stoves are annealed—that is, painted over with a composition which becomes part of the paper, and is fireproof. It is said to be impossible to burn them out, and they are much cheaper than iron stoves. Bath-tubs and pots are made in the same manner by compressing the paper made of linen fibres, and annealing. The tubs, we are assured, will last for ever, and never leak. Placed on the fire, they will not burn up; and it is almost impossible to break or injure them. Our rooms can be floored with this wonderfully accommodating material, as proved by the Indianapolis skating-rink before referred to in this *Journal*. It may here be mentioned that cracks in floors, around the skirting-board or other parts of a room, may be neatly and permanently filled by thoroughly soaking newspapers in paste made of one pound of flour, three quarts of water, and a tablespoonful of alum, thoroughly boiled and mixed. The mixture will be about as thick as putty, and may be forced into the cracks with a case-knife. It will harden like papier-mâché.

Doors, which one would think were polished mahogany but that they swing so lightly, and are free from swelling, cracking, or warping, are composed each of two thick paper boards, stamped and moulded into panels, and glued together with glue and potash, and then rolled through heavy rollers. These doors are first covered with a waterproof coating, then painted and varnished and hung in the ordinary way. Few persons can detect that they are not made of wood, particularly when used as sliding-doors.

Black walnut is said to be getting very scarce in this country; but picture-frames are now made of paper, and coloured like walnut, and are so perfect that no one could detect them without cutting them. Paper-pulp, glue, linseed oil, and carbonate of lime or whiting, are mixed together and heated into a thick cream, which on being allowed to cool is run into moulds and hardened.

Drawing-rooms can be set off by handsome pianos manufactured from paper—a French invention. A beautiful musical instrument of this kind has lately been an object of great curiosity to the connoisseurs and musical savants of Paris. The entire case is made of compressed paper, to which is given a hard surface and a cream-white brilliant polish. The legs and sides are ornamented with arabesques and floral designs. The exterior and as much of the interior as can be seen when the instrument is open, are covered with wreaths and medallions painted in miniature by some of the leading artists of Paris. The tone of this instrument is said to be of excellent quality, though not loud. The broken, alternating character of piano music is replaced by a rich, full, continuous roll of sound, resembling somewhat that of the organ. Only two of these instruments have been made. One is still on exhibition; the other has been sold to the Duke of Devonshire.

Our correspondence may be conducted through the medium of the latest novelties in note-paper.

We have had the 'ragged edge,' in imitation of the hand-made paper of long ago; and now we have the Palæographic, an exaggeration of the same idea. The edges are charred and torn, and the surface of the paper time-stained. A buyer might call it dirty, but it is only 'artistic.' There is also a dull red paper with silver and gold dots sprinkled over it, and another with stars, in imitation of certain wall-papers. A thin and rather pretty paper is 'the hammered silver' with water-marks representing the lines in hammered silver-work. The morocco, alligator, and calf papers, embossed to imitate the surface of those leathers, are also interesting as novelties.

Notes can be jotted down with the paper pencils made in Germany. The paper is steeped in an adhesive liquid, and rolled around the lead to the required thickness, then dried and coloured to resemble a cedar pencil.

Paper plates, introduced by an ingenious *restaurateur* of Berlin, can now be used. Bread and butter, cakes, and similar articles were served by him on a pretty papier-mâché plate, having a border in relief, and resembling porcelain. They are cheap and light, and not liable to be broken.

Even knives and forks may now, we are told, be made of compressed paper. They can be used for any practical purpose, like steel ones. The household cutlery, it may here be mentioned, can be well preserved if wrapped up in paper prepared from ozokerit. This waxed paper is largely used in New York for wrapping hardware. Candies, fish, and butter, and a score of other articles, are also thus wrapped, and saved from injury through damp.

To prepare paper for wrapping up silver, six parts of caustic soda are dissolved in water until the hydrometer shows twenty degrees B. To this solution are added four parts of oxide of zinc, and boiled until dissolved. Sufficient water must next be added to reduce the solution to ten degrees B. Next dip the paper into this solution, and dry. This wrapping will very effectually preserve silver articles from being blackened by sulphuretted hydrogen, which is contained in the atmosphere of large cities.

Our household may also be supplied with the paper bottles now made on a large scale in Germany and Austria. The paper is coated on both sides with a mixture of blood-albumen, lime, and alum. After drying, the leaves are placed over each other, and then put into heated moulds. These bottles are made in two pieces, which are afterwards joined. Neither water nor alcohol has any action on such bottles, and it is thought that they will prove of great value to travellers, as there is little fear of breakage.

Our sleeping apartments can be provided with paper bed-clothes, curtains, and bedsteads. The latter pieces of furniture look beautiful, and are declared to be everlasting. They are made of slips of paper, instead of paper rings, as in the case of railway wheels before mentioned in this *Journal*, which wheels can now run on rails of the same material, some new particulars of which have come to hand. These, it is stated, can be produced—by an American Company in Russia—at a third of the cost of steel rails, and are extremely durable. Being much lighter than metal, these rails may be carried and laid at far less cost, and they will

doubtless diminish oscillation and wear and tear of rolling-stock. They are to be made of greater lengths than ordinary rails, and therefore will have fewer joints. The success or failure of the project seems simply a question of durability.

Useful, no doubt, will be found the small house-truck on wheels used for wheeling loads around the house. The sides and bottom of this are very thin, but made of finely compressed paper, capable of bearing a very great weight. In short, so universal is the application of this extraordinary substance, that the time seems not far distant when we may be living in a paper house, clad in paper clothes, sitting on a paper chair, writing at a paper desk with a patent paper pen on some novel kind of paper.

Land vehicles will probably ere long figure as further triumphs of the paper-mill; and why not steamboats? Canoes and launches built of the ever useful material we call paper have been described in this *Journal*. A Frenchman recently made an interesting experimental trip in a paper boat from Paris to Marseille, and returned to his starting-point opposite the Tuileries Gardens. The hull of this curious little boat is said to be not much more than one-eighth of an inch thick. The voyage under the circumstances was not without danger. It extended over six hundred miles, and was full of adventure, particularly in going down the rapid Rhone. The voyage was undertaken with the intention of proving that paper boats can do good service, and that they can be made as well in France as in England and America.

We have before mentioned a plan for rendering paper so tough that it can be used in making boxes, combs, and even boots. The usefulness of toughened paper in a more scientific way has also been proved. Filter paper can be rendered tough and at the same time pervious to liquids by immersing it in nitric acid of relative density 1·42, then washing it in water. The product is different from parchment paper made with sulphuric acid, and it can be washed and rubbed like a piece of linen. It contracts in size under the treatment, and undergoes a slight decrease of weight, the nitrogen being removed and the ash diminished. The toughened paper can be used with a vacuum pump in ordinary funnels without extra support, and fits sufficiently close to prevent undue access of air, which is not the case with parchment paper. Toughened filter paper, it is thought, will be exceedingly useful not only to chemists, but to other scientists, both practical and theoretical.

Towels made of this wonderfully adaptable material are said to be used in the surgical dispensary of Philadelphia for drying wounds. Sponges are not easily perfectly cleansed after being once used, so they are never employed in the hospital. Ordinary cotton or linen towels are much preferable to sponges. The Japanese paper towels, however, answer the same purpose as cotton ones, and are so cheap that they can be thrown away after being used. The paper towels are hardly suitable for drying hands after washing, unless several towels be used at once, because a large amount of moisture on the hands soon saturates a single towel. For removing blood from wounds, a paper towel is crumpled up into a sort of ball and then used as a sponge. Such balls



absorb blood rapidly. The crude ornamental pictures on each of the towels are of no advantage, nor are they, so far as is known any objection.

The *Photographic News* (United States) gives instructions how to make translucent paper. Take a negative on the paper and pin it, paper-side up, on a board. Apply butter (cold) all over it with the fingers; use plenty. Then hold the negative over a paraffin stove with the flame turned low. Keep the melting butter moving over the less greased portions till an even surface is obtained, which will be in about five minutes. Then lay, paper-side still up, on a board or cloth, and, while warm, rub off the surplus butter with tufts of cotton-wool; it will probably be necessary to remove the negative several times during the operation. Should any butter by chance get on the film-side of the negative, warm it and rub it with cotton-wool, and it will at once come off. Give a final rub with cotton-wool dipped in alcohol, and the negative is ready to print from, and has a fine ground-glass appearance.

Mention has before been made of waterproof luminous paper which will shine in the dark. According to a German authority, it is prepared from a mixture of forty parts paper stock, ten parts phosphorescent powder, ten parts water, one part gelatine, and one part bichromate of potash.

Several kinds of fireproof paper have already been noticed. An excellent one is now made by a combination of asbestos and infusorial earth. About forty parts, in bulk, of fine disintegrated asbestos fibre, and about sixty parts of what is known as 'infusorial earth,' are taken and placed in a dry state in an ordinary beating-engine, and then sufficient water is added while the machine is in operation to beat the mass into pulp just thin enough to form upon an ordinary cylinder. The web is taken from the cylinder and finished in the usual manner. This forms a flexible paper, which may be used wherever ordinary paper is employed, differing, however, from ordinary board in being fireproof.

Many and various materials from which paper is manufactured have been mentioned by us from time to time. The principal material used in Tonquin is said to be the *ke-yioh* or paper-tree. Its bark is macerated, and then rubbed in mortars so as to reduce it to a fine pulp. It is thus made with a certain quantity of water into a clear paste, which is sized with an infusion made from the shavings of the *gomao* tree. The paper is made sheet by sheet by women, by what now seems a primitive process, yet each worker is said to produce one thousand sheets a day.

Some interesting paper-making statistics are occasionally compiled, the accuracy, however, of which may be open to question, when we are told the exact number of pounds used up severally by newspapers, books, letters, &c. It is said that the paper-mills of Britain produce in a few weeks sufficient paper to carpet the whole of London. The United States produce a great deal of this material, but Europe double the amount. On the Continent, it has been computed that the average amount of paper used by individuals in different countries amounts

to eleven and a half pounds by an Englishman, ten and a quarter pounds by an American, eight pounds by a German, seven and a half pounds by a Frenchman, three and a half pounds by an Italian or Austrian, a pound and a half by a Spaniard, one pound by a Russian, and two pounds by a Mexican. If the consumption of paper is a gauge of civilisation, this table of averages is very flattering to our national conceit.

#### AN ORACLE.

##### AN INCIDENT ON THE TRANSVAAL GOLD-FIELDS.

GOLD has been found in various parts of the Transvaal for some years now; indeed, according to some authorities, the northern districts of that country supplied the greater portion of the gold with which Solomon adorned his wondrous Temple, and of which the fair Queen of Sheba made such lavish use. Whether this be so or not, matters little for the purpose of this relation; suffice it to know that gold has of late years been found in sufficient quantities to induce some hundreds of adventurers, in the first instance, to try their luck as gold-diggers, with the hope of gaining a prize sufficiently large to place them beyond necessity; but, as in so many thousands of other cases in the farther-off fields of Australasia and California, few ever approximated to their desires. A gold-field—from an Australian point of view—never has existed in South Africa, and probably never will, owing to a variety of circumstances, but mainly from the fact, that the country has suffered in ages past from successive eruptions, which have destroyed the original 'run' of the deposit, making the search for it altogether too risky for even the most hopeful of diggers. No doubt, men will always be found willing and content to 'prospect' on and on, with the chance of a nugget turning up to pay for all their outlay and the disadvantages of the life they are compelled to lead; but a gold-field such as we have been wont to visit, or read of, where thousands are supported in one way or another, will never be seen in Africa.

Nowadays, the gold-bearing district is in the hands of concessionaires, who work upon a principle that does away with the romance that usually hung around the life of a gold-digger in the old time. The incident about to be related took place ten years since; the exact locality it is unnecessary to fix upon. Should any of the diggers who were present on the occasion come across this relation, they will have no difficulty in bringing to mind the scene and the principal actor therein, and 'a right good sort' he was too.

Jasper Hillary had not been over-well treated by the fickle goddess at any period of his career, the last year or two of which had been spent upon the Diamond Fields in the neighbouring province of Griqualand; and although a hard and energetic worker, luck seemed to have made a dead set against him; so he had returned again to the scene of his earlier efforts as a digger; and with a shade of better luck pegged out his claim on Antbear Creek; and having successfully applied for water-rights, had brought in water from a distance of over two miles, and began work with a decided improvement in his prospects.

Most of the diggers were having a 'good time' of it in their claims, and few grumblers were to be found; and but for the doubtful character of one or two individuals, whose mysterious habits formed a constant topic for speculation among the diggers, all seemed to be going as merry as marriage-bells. The individuals alluded to were men of a decided nationality, sleek and well-fed in appearance, but with a tendency to commune with the native 'boys' (a term in general use in the South African colonies, signifying servant) that savoured of something other than the mere desire to learn the *lingo*, or study habits and customs. Wherever native labour is employed, it is generally looked upon as a suspicious circumstance to see Europeans haunting the huts and kraals where the employees live. So at least it was considered in this community of hard workers, who failed to understand how men could live for choice or pleasure among surroundings unconducive to comfort, were it not that a 'something' could be made out of it.

One day, Hillary, whose claim had been turning out a fairly level yield of gold, came up to the hotel—where some six or seven of us were lounging over our pipes, preparatory to 'turning to' again for the afternoon's spell of work—his face wearing a somewhat angry and puzzled look, and addressed us after the following strain: 'Look here! My luck's run out, or there is some thievery going on among my "boys."'

'What's up, old man? What's wrong?' asked Drake.

'Just this: I "cleaned-up" this morning, and I didn't get a bit of gold larger than a pea. Now, all along, as I worked up my ground, the gold has been getting heavier. It has been coarsish all through; but just where I expected to get the heaviest, it has dwindled down to dust, with a few shotty bits. There's something wrong, and I am going to puzzle it out. By-the-bye, I daresay you'll agree with me that it is a queer thing that those shiny gents'—here he pointed in the direction of the tent occupied by the men of decided nationality—'should be over at Hermit's—at the bank—paying in gold. Yes, that's so. Mike Bruty saw 'em; he told me so himself.'

'Have they got licenses?' asked Drake.

'O yes. I've found that's all right; they're 'cute enough for that.'

'What are you going to do, eh, Jasper?'

'Well, I'm going to watch my "boys" a bit first. There's one among 'em I am not very sweet upon. If I find him as tricky at his work this week as he has been, I'll lay a trap for him; and you fellows shall come up and see how it works next time I clean-up, which won't be before next week.'

Soon after this, it came to Hillary's knowledge that this 'boy' of his, of whom he had expressed himself so dubious, had been seen in the bush some little distance from the camp in close conversation with one of the shiny gentry; and this led Hillary to come to the conclusion that the 'boy' was playing him false; so he at once determined to put him to the test. On the Saturday following, the day on which he had arranged to clean-up his sluice-box, this doubtful 'boy' was set to work at the head of the box where the pay-dirt was

being shovelled in; and at this comparatively isolated work it was an easy matter to watch him. As soon as the pay-gravel is shovelled into a sluice-box, the water rushing through carries away all the stones and sand over the ripples at the lower end of the box, and whatever light gold is carried with it, sinks, and becomes lodged in between the ripples or stones with which the box is paved. All the coarser specks and nuggets remain at the head of the box where first dropped in with the gravel, the superior gravity of the metal preventing the weaker force of water from carrying it away. Thus, any one at the head of the box seeing anything like a stoppage in the smooth flow of water, becomes aware that a piece of heavy gold is at the bottom; and if the worker ceases to put in more gravel, the water soon becomes clear enough to enable him to see the gold. So, then, this doubtful 'boy' was set to the work of feeding the box; and towards the close of the operations, Hillary placed a nugget of about an ounce in such a position in the heap of gravel that the 'boy' was bound to see it. As Hillary expected, the native did see it; and looking cautiously around to see that no one was watching, he carefully appropriated the nugget, and placing it in the folds at the bottom of his trousers-leg, which, as usual, was rolled up—the garment in question being something too long for him—proceeded to finish up the heap of gravel.

Hillary had been carefully watching for this, and having seen the whole performance, came away satisfied that he had the culprit safe in his keeping.

After the cleaning-up was over, and the 'boys' had gone through the business of washing themselves and preparing for the rest usually accorded them after two o'clock on Saturdays, Hillary sent word to us to the effect that if we wanted to see the fun, we were to go round to his hut at once. We found him sitting on a rock with about a dozen 'boys' around him waiting to receive their week's wage.

After our arrival, Hillary addressed them in their own language, of which he was a fairly good master, telling them how his yield of gold had fallen off, and that there was no reason why it should have done so, as the 'white baas' ahead of him was finding well; that he was quite sure some one was robbing him, and that it must be one or more among themselves.

Of course their protestations to the contrary were both loud and vehement, vowing, as natives generally do, that he was too good a 'baas' to be robbed, and that they would avenge the man who could do so.

'Very well, then,' said Hillary; 'if you are all innocent, you will all consent to stand the trial which I shall give you.—Now, look here'—here he pulled a small pocket-compass out of his wallet, and showing it to them, explained that the Spirit that made the needle inside shake about, would presently become aware as to who the thief was; would then remain quite still, pointing to the guilty man.

This seemed to tickle their fancies, though we rather thought, other than its being likely to prove an amusement to them, they had but little faith in its power of divination.

Hillary then placed them in a circle round him, at distances of about two yards apart, taking care to place the man he knew to be guilty as due north as possible. Then telling them again that the Spirit never made a mistake, and that whoever the needle pointed to was to be shot, without any more palaver took his rifle, and then placing the compass on the ground in the centre of the group, stood on one side.

It was amusing to watch the varying expressions upon the faces of the 'boys' standing around—from the moment the compass was set on the ground, when the needle spun about with rapid vibrations, till the gradual and final decline to stationary—expressions of wonder, mirth, and incredulity gradually deepening into fear as the oscillations of the needle became weaker and weaker; and when it finally came to a stand, pointing to the guilty one, he, with a yell of dismay and an unnatural pallor upon him—I have seen a native go all but white—turned and fled, those remaining dropping to their haunches as Hillary with levelled rifle stood laughing at the success of his plan. Hillary had forgotten that he had eased the pull of his weapon a day or so before, and although he had no intention of taking life at the beginning, felt a kind of satisfaction as he drew the bead upon the retreating form. Be that as it may, the excitement had no doubt wrought upon his nervous system; the lightened trigger yielded under the trembling finger, a report followed, simultaneous with which, the flying Kaffir gave one spring into the air and fell dead on the hillside, along which he had been speeding but a moment before.

The authorities made it too warm for Hillary, who had to clear out. He eventually gave himself up, was placed in the *trunk*; and after being incarcerated in this building, made of wattles daubed with mud on the outside, minus a door, for a whole week, the diggers became impatient that one of their number should suffer such indignity 'all about a thief of a nigger.' They took upon themselves to effect his release; and escorting him over the border, parted from him full of regrets that the law of the land made it necessary for him to absent himself, at any rate for a time, from among them.

He got a rattling good price for his claim, and the purchaser did not lose on the bargain; but the lesson upon the 'boys' who were working on the creek wrought an immense amount of good; and what was better, the shiny gentry deemed it advisable to discontinue their evangelising among natives employed by diggers.

#### MEDICINE IN HEATHENDOM.

DAVID LIVINGSTONE uttered a truth the civilised world has been slow to grasp, when he said that 'preaching the gospel to the heathen includes much more than is implied in the usual picture of a missionary—a man going about with a Bible under his arm.' He showed in his explorations what he meant; for he made it his aim wherever he went to introduce humanising influences, and to bring into play all the forces of civilisation which could alleviate suffering.

We are glad to find Dr Lowe of the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society emphasising this requirement, and strenuously advocating the benefits of medical missions in his recently published book, *Medical Missions: their Place and Power*.

In Heathendom the densest ignorance as to the cause, prevention, and cure of disease prevails. In India and Africa, a close connection is established between religion and medicine. Sickness is a punishment sent by the gods or by evil spirits; and it will be followed by death, if propitiation is not made to the offended deities. The Chinese are a little more enlightened. They have a medical literature of a kind; but they know nothing about even the elementary principles of anatomy and physiology. A Chinaman who wishes to become a doctor does not go through any training or spend money in buying a practice; he has only to purchase a pair of spectacles, and gather some herbs, a few spiders, and some snakes, which he places in bottles in the window of his shop. The bottles are his advertisement; they tell all who are in need of healing to come to him. His favourite prescription is a horrible pill, compounded of parts of snakes, wasps, centipedes, toads, and scorpions, ground small and mixed with honey. Another pill, supposed to be of extraordinary efficacy in cases of extreme weakness, is made of the bones of tigers. The belief in its merit is based on this strange piece of reasoning: 'The tiger is very strong; the bone is the strongest part of the strong animal—therefore, a pill of this must be pre-eminently strengthening.' These facts speak eloquently as to the state of medical science in China. The lamentable consequence is an excessive mortality. It is calculated that thirty-three thousand die daily, and this number is of course largely increased during an epidemic, which is no uncommon visitor.

The Siamese believe that the human body is composed of four elements—fire, earth, wind, and water. They divide the body into thirty-two parts, and teach that it is subject to ninety-six diseases, caused by the disturbance of the elements which enter into its composition. Fevers are traced to an undue proportion of fire. The wind is the fertile source of ailments. If you ask a native what is wrong with him, the chances are ten to one he will reply, 'Wind.'

In Southern India, festivals are observed at which sacrifices of sheep, goats, and fowls are offered to Siva to avert sickness. Another festival is held by convalescent invalids, who seek to fulfil the vows they made. It is attended by scenes disgusting beyond conception.

Some of the tribes in Central Africa have male and female doctors. The ladies play the largest part in the ministry of healing; the activity of the men is confined to the treatment of wounds and snake-bites. They handle a broken arm or leg in a curious fashion: if it is a simple fracture, the limb is pulled straight; if it is broken in pieces, some small cuts are made in the flesh, and as soon as the swelling

is reduced, if the limb cannot be straightened, the broken bones are pulled out and a powdered root is applied to the wound. The woman-doctor puts great faith in magic. When she goes to see a patient, she takes with her a basket containing what she is pleased to call a magic wand, but what is in reality a double tube, nearly a foot long. One tube is filled with small stones; the other is empty. She waves the wand over the sick person, to begin with; she then places it over the part in which pain is felt. After going through some manipulatory tricks, she professes to draw the disease out in a tangible form; but she is always cautious enough to conceal it from the patient.

If the natives of the Friendly Islands suffer from a spreading ulceration, they have the limb cut off with a sharp shell. The excruciating agony of such an operation can be better imagined than described. Should a man go mad, he is invariably buried alive. In the South Pacific Islands, a free incision is the panacea for all the ill flesh is heir to. Wherever pain is felt, a cut is made, as the natives simply put it, 'to let the pain out.'

Other specimens of the appalling ignorance of the doctors of Heathendom might easily be given; but those adduced will serve our purpose. They show the need for the introduction of European skill. That need should be in itself an eloquent appeal to the chivalry of young doctors. The best way to spend life is to spend it in the service of others; and surely no better service could be rendered than to lighten the darkness and alleviate the sufferings of the debased inhabitants of heathen lands.

#### A FEW PULPIT VAGARIES.

Whilst recognising the noble part the pulpit has taken in the reformation of the world and education of the people, it must be admitted that it has been occasionally the scene of humorous incidents, some of which, perhaps without irreverence, it may be permissible to recall.

Possibly the greatest number of pulpit recollections hang upon misquotations and misplacement of terms. Only recently, the writer heard a minister declare 'it was impossible for any man by thought to add one *stature* to his *cubit*'—a truth so important to his mind as to merit an impressive repetition. Another minister affirmed, on the authority of the Scriptures, 'Moses *pulled off his feet*, for the ground on which he stood was holy.'

The writer thinks it was a curate who informed us that 'immediately Peter crew, the cock went out and wept bitterly.' Another of his order certainly said: 'Till heaven and earth pass, one *tit* or one *jottle* shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.' Another pulpit orator, quoting from Job, gave out: 'Skin for skin—as the old Patriarch said,' leading us to infer that Satan was the progenitor of a family, in addition to being the father of lies. A popular preacher speaking of Goldsmith's poor parson, told a crowded audience that 'children plucked the coats of that good man's tail to share his kindly smile.' These children must have been a contrast to some others spoken about by one who, illustrating moral depravity, said he had 'seen even

little children that could neither walk nor talk run about the streets blaspheming.'

A minister once commencing grandiloquently: 'Jacob sold his birthright for a pot of message,' paused, and thinking, somehow, it scarcely sounded right, he repeated: 'Jacob sold his birthright for a pot of message.' Still querying the correctness of his version, and anxious to make it correct, he said again rather more slowly: 'Jacob sold his birthright for a pot of message.' Seeing the puzzled and amused looks of his congregation, he hesitated once more, only to assume a determination that this time at anyrate there should be no mistake on this point, by saying very deliberately: 'My dear friends, some of you do not appear to sufficiently appreciate the full import of my quotation of a biblical fact; for the benefit of such, I will repeat it, and repeat it with emphasis—that "Jacob—sold his birthright—for a—pot—of—message."'

Of all scriptural characters to whom special attention has been paid, not one has received more unremitting favour than the retrospective spouse of Lot, and we can understand the feeling of a long-suffering hearer who had heard the same minister preach nine times upon 'Remember Lot's wife.'—'Remember Lot's wife!' cried the afflicted hearer; 'why, it is absolutely impossible for me ever to forget her.'

#### OUTSIDE THE GARDEN GATE.

Two little forms outside the gate,  
Who hour by hour in patience wait;  
Four wistful eyes as bright as stars  
Peeping with wonder through the bars;  
Four little hands that long to hold  
Bright flowers, or apples red and gold;  
Two shrill young voices that would say:  
'Give us some flowers or fruit to-day!'  
Only—what little tongue could dare  
Ask such a boon from lady fair?

She comes! and down the velvet walk  
Moves gently, and with silver talk  
Beguiles the time; her comrades glide  
In pleasant converse by her side.  
They do not see the eager eyes  
Who watch them with a glad surprise.  
To rustic judgment, they must seem  
Like white-robed angels in a dream,  
So fair, so graceful, and so blest  
In such sweet garden bowers to rest,  
And no doubt plucking many a gem  
Which seems so far away from them!

Alas! how oft our mortal fate  
Keeps us outside the garden gate!  
Almost we feel we might be there,  
Wandering amid those scenes so fair;  
Almost our fingers seem to clasp  
Bright flowers, that still elude our grasp;  
Some adverse fortune seems to say:  
'Tis not for thee; so, go thy way!'

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